

[30th March 1928]

Legislative

Principles regarding voting by nominated members.

* 1834 Q.—Mr. A. PARASURAMA RAO: Will the hon. the Member for Revenue be pleased to state—

(a) whether it is a fact that Mr. V. Ramjee Rao, M.L.C., was approached by Mr. Slater, the Labour Commissioner, on 20th March 1928 soon after the voting on the Ministers' salaries was over, and found fault with publicly for remaining neutral in the division on the Ministers' salaries;

(b) whether there are any set of rules enunciating the principles regarding the voting by nominated members, and if so, whether the Government will be pleased to place them on the table of this House;

(c) whether, if nominated members vote against the Government in any matter, they can continue to be Members of the House thereafter; and

(d) whether it is a fact that Mr. Slater or some other Member of Government has been in the habit of canvassing votes from the nominated members; if so, under whose authority and on what occasions?

A.—(a) The Government are not aware whether the facts are as suggested.

(b) The answer to the first part of the question is in the negative.

(c) Please see the reply to clause (b).

(d) The Government are not aware that the fact is as suggested. The Government however are not precluded from seeking support from any section of the House.

Mr. C. N. MUTHURANGA MUDALIYAR:—"May I have your permission, Sir, with regard to the answer to (a) to ask the information from the hon. Member, Mr. Ramjee Rao?"

The hon. the PRESIDENT:—"Under what Standing Order?"

Mr. C. N. MUTHURANGA MUDALIYAR:—"It has been the practice, Sir."

The hon. the PRESIDENT:—"The question addressed to a non-official Member must relate to some Bill, resolution or other matter connected with the business of the Council for which the Member is responsible."

Mr. C. N. MUTHURANGA MUDALIYAR:—"It has been the practice, Sir."

The hon. the PRESIDENT:—"I am referring to the Standing Order."

Mr. S. SATYAMURTI:—"May I ask Mr. Slater, who is not here, the Labour Commissioner, whether he approached Mr. Ramjee Rao?"

The hon. the PRESIDENT:—"I do not find him here. He has not been given notice that any question will be put to him."

Mr. S. SATYAMURTI:—"He is an official member."

The hon. the PRESIDENT:—"He is not here."

Mr. S. SATYAMURTI:—"The question at least may go into the records of the proceedings."

The hon. the PRESIDENT:—"If the member is here, the question might be put."

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Mr. S. SATYAMURTI :—" He is just outside. May I request that this may be taken some time hence ? "

The hon. the PRESIDENT :—" He is not in the House. "

Mr. S. SATYAMURTI :—" May I ask for some elucidation of the answer contained in the answer to clause (a) ? Since the question was sent, has the Government taken any steps to ascertain if the facts are as stated in clause (a) ? "

The hon. Sir NORMAN MARJORIBANKS :—" Sir, we have made certain enquiries and have been unable to find any basis for this except lobby gossip. "

Mr. S. SATYAMURTI :—" Sir, may I ask, Sir, whether the Government, in the course of their enquiries, have satisfied themselves that Mr. Slater did not talk to Mr. Ramjee Rao at all on this matter of voting or the answer which is cleverly ambiguous is that the Government are not aware that the facts are as suggested ? Then what are the facts ? Did Mr. Slater talk to Mr. Ramjee Rao or not ? If he had talked, what did he talk ? "

The hon. Sir NORMAN MARJORIBANKS :—" I do not propose to add anything to what I have said on that point. "

Mr. S. SATYAMURTI :—" May I ask some information on the question of fact ? In the course of the enquiry the Government have made I am asking whether the Government are in a position to contradict the categorical statement of fact in this question that Mr. Slater did talk to Mr. Ramjee Rao. I am asking this in view of the extraordinarily vague . . . "

The hon. the PRESIDENT :—" The hon. Member need not comment on the answer. "

Mr. S. SATYAMURTI :—" I am simply asking in view of the ambiguous. '

The hon. the PRESIDENT :—" My ruling is that members are not entitled to comment upon the answer. "

Mr. S. SATYAMURTI :—" In view of the ambiguity of the answer . . . "

The hon. the PRESIDENT :—" The hon. Member is not entitled to give reasons 'that in view of the ambiguity, etc.' He is giving the reasons. "

The hon. Sir NORMAN MARJORIBANKS :—" I have already answered, Sir. "

Mr. ABDUL HAMID KHAN :—" May I ask the hon. the Revenue Member if the enquiry consisted of questions put to Mr. Slater, or did the Government ask Mr. Ramjee Rao how far this was true or correct ? "

The hon. Sir NORMAN MARJORIBANKS :—" No regular enquiry was made, Sir. I endeavoured to ascertain what was meant by 'publicly' and I heard there was lobby gossip on the subject. I satisfied myself that there was no public speech or official act by the Labour Commissioner. "

Mr. S. SATYAMURTI :—" May I know who are the gentlemen or what are the sources from whom or from which the Government made this enquiry as a result of which the hon. Member came to the conclusion which he has just given expression to ? "

The hon. Sir NORMAN MARJORIBANKS :—" Sources of gossip are not definable. "

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Mr. S. SATYAMURTI :—" May I ask if Mr. Slater was asked by Government on this matter ? "

The hon. Sir NORMAN MARJORIBANKS :—" I had a conversation with Mr. Slater."

Mr. S. SATYAMURTI :—" What did Mr. Slater tell the Government, Sir ? "

The hon. Sir NORMAN MARJORIBANKS :—" I do not propose to say that."

Mr. S. SATYAMURTI :—" May I know if the Government asked Mr. Ramjee Rao about this ? "

The hon. Sir NORMAN MARJORIBANKS :—" I did not. I do not know if any other hon. Member did."

Mr. S. SATYAMURTI :—" May I know with reference to the answer given whether the answer is that of the Government or that of the Revenue Member ? "

The hon. Sir NORMAN MARJORIBANKS :—" Government."

Mr. S. SATYAMURTI :—" If so, did any other Member talk to Mr. Ramjee Rao ? "

The hon. Sir NORMAN MARJORIBANKS :—" Notice, Sir."

Mr. S. SATYAMURTI :—" With regard to the answer to clause (b) of the question, apart from any rules to which reference is made in clause (b), are there are any conventions especially in view of the Finance Member's statement that nominated members must always carry on the King's Government . . . ? "

The hon. the PRESIDENT :—" I do not like that reasons and explanations should be given."

Mr. S. SATYAMURTI :—" I must make myself intelligible, Sir."

The hon. the PRESIDENT :—" Yes, yes. But the rules say that arguments are to be excluded. The hon. Member might put it in another form."

Mr. S. SATYAMURTI :—" I will try my best with my ingenuity. In view of these new rulings, if I may say so respectfully . . ."

The hon. the PRESIDENT :—" Order, order. The hon. Member will sit down. I cannot allow the hon. Member to characterize my rulings."

Mr. C. RAMASOMAYAJULU :—" With reference to clause (d), may I know, Sir, whether the Government can canvass votes with reference to the subject matter of any resolution or Government can canvass votes with reference to Bills or matters of general policy ? "

The hon. Sir NORMAN MARJORIBANKS :—" I do not know what the hon. Member means by 'canvass' ? "

Mr. C. RAMASOMAYAJULU :—" May I point out that clause (d) of the question refers to canvassing for votes and clause (d) of the answer refers to seeking support by the Government from any section of the House ? "

The hon. Sir NORMAN MARJORIBANKS :—" The answer, Sir, is that the Government may seek support."

Mr. C. RAMASOMAYAJULU :—" I take it that the answer means that the Government is justified in canvassing votes for support from any section of

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the House. My question is whether Government can do this on any particular question before the House or on any matter of general policy. What is the policy ? ”

The hon. Sir NORMAN MARJORIBANKS :—“ It is not limited, if canvassing means seeking support.”

Mr. P. BHARTAVATSULU NAYUDU :—“ What is the meaning of seeking support ? It cannot be seeking support to ask why and how he stood.”

The hon. Sir NORMAN MARJORIBANKS :—“ The answer on the paper is quite clear.”

Dr. B. S. MALLAYYA :—“ May I know from the hon. the Revenue Member whether it is open to Mr. Slater to coax or pull an unwilling nominated Member to stand up when the division bell has been rung and the poll is going on ? ”

The hon. the PRESIDENT :—“ It has nothing to do with the present question.”

Dr. B. S. MALLAYYA :—“ May I know it from the President ? ”

The hon. the PRESIDENT :—“ The hon. Member will have another opportunity.”

Mr. SAMI VENKATACHALAM CHETTI :—“ May I know, Sir, with reference to the answer to clause (a), whether Mr. Slater has contradicted the report suggested in the question ? ”

The hon. Sir NORMAN MARJORIBANKS :—“ What report, Sir ? ”

Mr. SAMI VENKATACHALAM CHETTI :—“ In clause (a) it is alleged that Mr. Slater approached a particular hon. Member and found fault with him for remaining neutral. May I know if Mr. Slater has contradicted it in the conversation he has had with the hon. the Revenue Member ? ”

The hon. Sir NORMAN MARJORIBANKS :—“ Oh, certainly, Sir.”

Mr. SAMI VENKATACHALAM CHETTI :—“ May I know, Sir, whether the Government are precluded from asking the support of the nominated Members in respect of any measure the Government want to support ? ”

The hon. Sir NORMAN MARJORIBANKS :—“ The question is answered on the paper, Sir.”

Mr. P. ANJANEYULU :—“ With regard to the answer to (d)—the first portion of it—Government are not aware of the practice as suggested. May I know if it is a fact that the fact approximates the suggestion ? ”

The hon. Sir NORMAN MARJORIBANKS :—“ I am unable to follow that subtlety.”

Mr. D. NARAYANA RAJU :—“ May I know if the hon. the Revenue Member ascertained from Mr. Ramjee Rao himself whether the facts are as stated ? ”

The hon. Sir NORMAN MARJORIBANKS :—“ I have answered that.”

Mr. D. NARAYANA RAJU :—“ Why did he not propose to ascertain the truth of the matter ? ”

The hon. Sir NORMAN MARJORIBANKS :—“ It was not thought necessary to pursue enquiries into a matter of lobby gossip.”

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a.m.

Mr. SAMI VENKATACHALAM CHETTI :—" May I know, in view of the conversation that the hon. the Revenue Member had with Mr. Slater, why he thought that Mr. Ramjee Rao was wrong in having remained neutral in the division on the Ministers' salaries ? "

The hon. Sir NORMAN MARJORIBANKS :—" I did not ask Mr. Slater his opinion on that point."

Mr. P. BHAKTAVATSULU NAYUDU :—" Sir, the answer to (d) says 'The Government *however* are not precluded, etc.' May I know the force of the word 'however' ? " (Laughter.)

The hon. the PRESIDENT :—" It is not a supplementary question to ask for the meaning of a word."

Mr. A. RANGANATHA MUDALIYAR :—" May I know whether Mr. Ramjee Rao himself has moved in the matter ? "

The hon. Sir NORMAN MARJORIBANKS :—" Not that I know of."

Mr. P. BHAKTAVATSULU NAYUDU :—" It is stated 'The Government *however* are not precluded, etc.' Are they authorized, Sir ? " (Laughter.)

Mr. BASHEER AHMAD SAYEED :—" May I know whether it is not a fact that Government on prior occasions has stated that nominated Members are at liberty to exercise their vote in the House as they please ? "

The hon. Sir NORMAN MARJORIBANKS :—" If the hon. Member assures me that it was so, I accept it. There is nothing said now to contradict that."

Mr. P. ANJANEYULU :—" May I know whether the Government is not aware that Mr. Ramjee Rao and Mr. Slater had a hot discussion on this subject ? "

The hon. Sir NORMAN MARJORIBANKS :—" In all discussions there is certain degree of heat; what degree of heat there was in this case I can't say." (Laughter.)

Mr. C. V. VENKATARAMANA AYYANGAR :—" May I know whether the Government are in a position to deny the facts mentioned in (a) as suggested ? The answer says 'They are not aware, etc.' But from the conversation and other information, will the Government say that they can deny the facts as suggested ? "

The hon. Sir NORMAN MARJORIBANKS :—" What exactly are the facts the Government do not know ? The question does not state facts specifically ; it is merely a suggestion."

Mr. C. V. VENKATARAMANA AYYANGAR :—" May I know whether the Government can contradict the correctness of the suggestions made ? "

The hon. Sir NORMAN MARJORIBANKS :—" Well, Sir, the Government would have been prepared to say simply 'No', in answer to the question on the paper but for the fact that there seemed to have been some discussion in the lobby ; therefore they thought it better not to give an unqualified answer as something of the kind might have passed."

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Mr. C. V. VENKATARAMANA AYYANGAR :—" In view of what has taken place now, apart from the question of suggestions and facts, there seems to be some doubt whether the Government can now deny the correctness of the suggestions made."

The hon. Sir NORMAN MARJORIBANKS :—" Substantially they are incorrect; but there may be some foundation for them."

Rao Sahib R. SRINIVASAN :—" With reference to clause (c), when any matter is brought by Government against the interests of the depressed classes, may I ask whether it is the proposal of the Government that the nominated Members should vote with the Government?"

The hon. the PRESIDENT :—" That is a hypothetical question."

Mr. ABDUL HAMID KHAN :—" May I know from the Government whether at least now they are willing to make an enquiry into the matter and ask about it from Mr. Ramjee Rao himself?"

The hon. Sir NORMAN MARJORIBANKS :—" Certainly not."

Mr. ABDUL HAMID KHAN :—" Why not?"

The hon. Sir NORMAN MARJORIBANKS :—" Because I am not aware of any reason why I should."

Mr. ABDUL HAMID KHAN :—" May I know whether it is not the duty of the Government, when a serious mention has been made against an officer of the Government that they should make enquiry and satisfy the House?"

The hon. Sir NORMAN MARJORIBANKS :—" I do not admit the premises, Sir, and therefore do not accept the conclusion."

Mr. C. RAMASOMAYAJULU :—" May I know whether at the time of nomination or afterwards, the Government insist that the nominated member must behave in a particular manner with reference to voting in the House?"

The hon. Sir NORMAN MARJORIBANKS :—" The Government do not nominate hon. Members of this House."

Mr. P. BHAKTAVATSULU NAYUDU :—" May I know what prevents Mr. Slater from entering the House, as he is now on the threshold there?" (Laughter.) (A voice: Fear of exposure).

The hon. the PRESIDENT :—" That is no supplementary question (Laughter). Hon. Members have got the right to enter or not to enter the House."

Sriman BISWANATH DAS Mahasayo :—" It is not a question of suggestion, it is a question of my own seeing."

The hon. the PRESIDENT :—" This is not the time for making a statement."

Sriman BISWANATH DAS Mahasayo :—" I make myself responsible for saying that I have seen it."

The hon. the PRESIDENT :—" Making an assertion does not constitute a supplementary question."

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Mr. SAMI VENKATACHALAM CHETTI :—"In view of the seriousness of the allegation made, will the hon. the Revenue Member be pleased to send for Mr. Slater?"

The hon. Sir NORMAN MARJORIBANKS :—"I do not admit the premises; therefore I do not accept this conclusion."

Mr. BASHEER AHMAD SAYEED :—"May I ask Mr. Ramjee himself to state what exactly took place?"

The hon. the PRESIDENT :—"I have already ruled that there is no provision for it under Standing Order No. 11 (2)."

Mr. BASHEER AHMAD SAYEED :—"May I ask the hon. Member to give information, such information as is within his own knowledge?"

The hon. the PRESIDENT :—"Mr. Satyamurti characterized my ruling as a new ruling. Will the hon. Member just explain?"

Mr. SATYAMURTI :—"I only meant, rulings with respect to new matters in respect of which rulings had not been given before. It was far from my intention to impugn or cast any reflection on the impartiality or competence of the Chair."

Depressed classes

Starting of the Nayadi colony in Olavakkod.

* 1835 Q.—Mr. V. I. MUNISWAMI PILLAI: Will the hon. the Home Member be pleased to state—

(a) whether any arrangements have so far been made to start the Nayadi colony in Olavakkod;

(b) what amount was budgeted for this scheme during the year 1927-28, and what amount the Labour department expect to spend on this account before the 31st March 1928; and what amount the Labour department expect to surrender during the current official year; and

(c) whether the Government contemplate to open any such colonies in any other locality in Malabar or in other districts in 1928-29?

A.—(a) The Government have no information.

(b) A sum of Rs. 1,000 has been provided for the purpose during the current official year and it has not been surrendered.

(c) No.

Mr. V. I. MUNISWAMI PILLAI :—"Who are the officials that are controlling the arrangements for the starting of the Nayadi colony?"

The hon. Khan Bahadur MUHAMMAD USMAN SAHIB Bahadur :—"The whole scheme is under the Commissioner of Labour."

Mr. A. RANGANATHA MUDALIYAR :—"May I know whether the scheme had been worked out in detail before Rs. 1,000 was provided?"

The hon. Khan Bahadur MUHAMMAD USMAN SAHIB Bahadur :—"Notice, Sir."

Mr. A. RANGANATHA MUDALIYAR :—"May I know why the scheme was not put into operation?"

The hon. Khan Bahadur MUHAMMAD USMAN SAHIB Bahadur :—"I want notice of the question."